

Brenda Wong Aoki

Biography

Brenda Wong Aoki creates intense, lyrical, solo theater pieces. Her work is a distinctive blend of dance, music and theater from both Western and Japanese dramatic traditions. The stories are drawn from Asian Pacific folk legends, urban guerilla street mythology and autobiographical accounts of life in these United States.

Brenda was awarded an NEA Solo Theater Fellowship in 1991 and 1994, and two Rockefeller Foundation Multi-Arts Production grants in 1992 and 1993. Her debut album, "Dreams and Illusions: Tales of the Pacific Rim," won first place for best spoken album of 1990 by the NAIRD (National Association of Independent Record Distributors).

Brenda Wong Aoki has performed across the United States, Canada and Japan including: The Kennedy Center and the Smithsonian Institution, Washington D.C.; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York City; Tsukuba World Expo, Japan; The New WORLD Theater; NAPPS Festival, Jonesborough, Tennessee; Center for Contemporary Arts, New Orleans; Japan America Theater, Los Angeles; East-West Center, Honolulu; San Diego Repertory Theater, California; and the Triplex Theater, New York City. She lives with her husband, musician/composer Mark Izu, and their son, Kai Kane, in San Francisco.

Artistic Statement

The Queen's Garden is urban storytelling and street mythology based on: my childhood (growing up "mixed up as chop suey" - I'm Chinese, Japanese, Spanish and Scots), my work with street gangs in Long Beach and fifteen years' experience as a community organizer and teacher in Watts, East Long Beach, Hunter's Point, the Mission, and Chinatown. *The Queen's Garden* is a story set amongst L.A.'s urban tribes. It's a love story. It's an epic. It was a big part of my life.

I tour a lot. All over the country. After the L.A. riots, I kept hearing a lot of people say, "Them folks in L.A. sure are crazy. Good thing we don't live there." But the reality is that the conditions that spawned the L.A. riots exist all over this country. I wrote *The Queen's Garden* in an effort to humanize that experience because it is only



ten minutes from Beverly Hills to South Central. And there are South Centrals springing up all over this country.

I am continually moved by the poignancy of life: by the heroic efforts people make just trying to live as human beings in this world at this time. In my work, I try to cut down to the emotional truth. It's a very physical thing for me. It comes out of my chest and moves to that little groove at the base of my throat. Right there. If it starts to ache, I know it's right. I know it's universal and I know I got to tell the story.

This play is dedicated to the memory of Chuck Furutani and to all those working on the front lines. And to the memory of Lia Asoau Tbiloa. Keep the Faith.

Production history

The Queen's Garden premiered at the Life on the Water Theater in San Francisco in October 1992, produced by the Climate Theatre. It went on to an extended run at the San Diego Repertory Theatre. Since then it has played at universities and theaters across the country. It won four L.A. Dramalogue awards and the San Diego Critics Circle Award. It is scheduled to be released in 1995 as a spoken-word album with music on both CD and cassette.

1 The Queen's

Brenda Wong Aoki

Dramaturg: Teresa Marinacci

Author's notes

The Queen's Garden can be elated produced with live music, sets, very simply produced with just blacks. I've done it both ways. the narrator plays a larger role because I thought this would be a reader. *The Queen's Garden* is a one-woman show. In performance, gestures, mannerisms can replace some narration.

Glossary

shaka: Hand symbol used between local guys meaning "take it easy"
mana: Personal power
ohana: Your family, and your couldn't live without, and your departed loved ones. These mean ohana.
ohana por vida: Westside saying you can't get through this life without ohana
talofa uso: Samoan saying mean come brothers and sisters"

1 The Queen's Garden

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Author's notes

The Queen's Garden can be elaborately produced with live music, sets, or it can be very simply produced with just a stool and blacks. I've done it both ways. In this script the narrator plays a larger role than usual because I thought this would help the reader. *The Queen's Garden* is conceived as a one-woman show. In performance body position, gestures, mannerisms and music can replace some narration.

Glossary

shaka: Hand symbol used between Hawaiian local guys meaning "take it easy"

mana: Personal power

ohana: Your family, and your friends you couldn't live without, and your dearly departed loved ones. These make up your *ohana*.

ohana por vida: Westside saying meaning you can't get through this life without your *ohana*

talofa uso: Samoan saying meaning "welcome brothers and sisters"

Part 1: Growing Up

Prologue

Dave's Pharmacy

Outrigger Regatta

Body Surfing

The Rip

Birthday Luau

Part 2: School Daze

Lit. 1 vs. Twelve o'Clock High

Sherry

Westside Warriors

The Riot

The Newcomb Dynasty

Kali Fights Steven

Part 3: The Teacher

College

The Demise of Dave's Pharmacy

Twelve o'Clock High

Rosie's Baby/Sherry's Fine

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Dinner with Father

Rosie's Dilemma

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Kali Comes Courting

Bullet's Death

Part 4: San Francisco

"If You're Going to San Francisco"

Kali in the Cage

Domestic Difficulties

The Cocktail Party

Re-enter Sherry

Re-enter Smoke

Last Ride thru the Westside

Goodbye

Shoot-out

Epilogue



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Part 1: Growing Up

Prologue

NARRATOR I grew up where the sunsets were a brilliant red, next to a bridge that crossed a great river that went on forever. My name is Brenda Jean. Brenda Jean Bavarro McPhillips Wong Aoki. I'm Pake, Buddahead, Chicana, and Haole: Chinese, Japanese, Mexican and Scots. And I grew up in a neighborhood surrounded by the 405, the 710, the L.A. County Flood control and the Carson oil fields. An island unto itself that we called the Westside. When I was 14 my boyfriend, Kali, used to say, "The Westside is the bestside. Cuz, it's the only side I know."

Kali's Mom, Aunti Mary, was the Queen of the Westside. She's the only person I know who could stop a street fight by embarrassing you to death.

AUNTI MARY Harold! Your Mama work all day at the donut shop for wot!? And You! Shige-boy, stick that lip back in your mouf! Boof of you! Hala!

NARRATOR Life was simple. People were good. Every night, Kali and I would go up on the bridge at sunset, hang out under a street light and watch sky blue pink clouds floating in the river. And I'd think "Yep!"

But now that I'm older I know that those sunsets are smog, our bridge - a freeway overpass, and our "river" - a cement canal, the flood control.

And today, it's not romantic hanging out under streetlights cuz they're bright yellow. Makes it easier for helicopter surveillance - LAPD. And hanging out under streetlights is like saying "Shoot me! Here I am! Just shoot me!" But I remember the old days . . .

Dave's Pharmacy

BRENDA Ring! Ring! Ring! Hello? Dave's Pharmacy. Can I help you?

NARRATOR It's 1966. I'm 13 years old and my dad, Dave, a typical Nisei, with a big heart and a permanent wave, is opening up the pharmacy 15 minutes late as he does everyday.

DAD 9:15? We're late! Come on in folks. Come on in. Hey, Big Mike! How ya doin'?

NARRATOR Big Mike is one of the regulars. He looks just like Humpty Dumpty.

BIG MIKE Mornin' Dave.

NARRATOR The regulars are there when we open and they stay all day. Dad says it's good cuz they make the store look busy.

BIG MIKE How am I doin'? . . . Well I sorta feel like . . . Jesus Christ, I'm gonna die. I think I'll lie down on the ground. Jesus Christ I'm gonna die.

DAD Well, looks like Big Mike's settled in for the day. Just move around him folks. Move around him.

NARRATOR And all day long my kid brother would peddle his big wheels around and around Big Mike and all the customers would try not to step on his toes.

DAD Mama? How's that coffee coming?

MOM It's ready. Are we gonna give away the banana bread too?

DAD Yep. Don't worry. Line up folks.

Coffee's on. Everything's A OK with Aoki!

BRENDA Ring! Ring! Ring! Dave's

Pharmacy, Brenda Jean at your service!

NARRATOR My job is answering the phones

and waiting on the customers. I'm the No. 1 daughter, the onesan, the sergeant.

BRENDA Baby bro, keep your Big Wheels inside the store.

NARRATOR That's my only brother, the kid on the big wheels. Up there - my quiet sisters, Laura and Donna. And over here, the two chatterboxes - Lisa and Theresa. The baby Sas. We call them the Beesas.

BRENDA Hello! Can I help you? It's over there by the coke machine. Ah, excuse me? I'm not Donna Ann. I'm Brenda Jean. *(To herself)* Geez, they always do that. They think we all look alike.

NARRATOR We do. It's cuz Mom makes all our clothes from the same bolt! Like, today we're wearing shocking pink with fuzzy yellow polka dots. So everyone will know we're in the same family.

BRENDA Mom, I gotta go to the bathroom!

NARRATOR I love the bathroom! It locks.

(Sound of locking door)

BRENDA *(She looks at herself in the full-length mirror.)* 4'10", 150 pounds, asthma, bifocals, eczema *(scratches, squeezes imaginary zit on forehead)* - my sisters called 'em stalactites.

(She sings) Johnny Angel, *(wheeze)* How I love him *(wheeze)* and I pray that someday he'll love me *(wheeze)* and together

we will see, how lovely heaven

DAD Brenda Jeannie? Brenda Je

BRENDA Yes, Daddy?

DAD Hate to disturb your medit we got a customer.

BRENDA Okay, Daddy. *(Sound o, unlocking)*

NARRATOR There in the doorw: hat . . . red mumu . . . huge h woman. Aunti Mary. The Bee: their chattering. Mom looks u stops. She moves to Big Mike MARY Auwe! You not make die silly guy! Get up!

(Big Mike notices he's okay.)

MIKE Aunti Mary! Aunti Mary

NARRATOR And she breezes p white plastic bucket filled wi

MARY Roses. Fresh picked by morning. Da best time! King

get Rose Gardens. I get da o garden on da Westside. Try :

huh? Folks come to Dave's :

drink coffee, talk story and roses. Today, Dave, I give y

and you give me da kine h' pressure medicine?

NARRATOR I take a rose *(sm)*

BRENDA Wow!

Outtrigger Regatta

NARRATOR A few days later

boardwalk and I hear . . .

MARY Hey, the drug man's me! Aunti Mary! You here

regatta? Come meet our t

Islanders: Smoke from Gu

Samoa, Kali, Twila, my ki

Toji from Japan, Gloria fr

Morrie Goldbaum . . . Whe

Morrie Goldbaum!

MORRIE New York!

MARY Dat's right! We all f

Brenda Jean, where you

BRENDA Well, my mom's

China, Mexico and Scotl:

family's from Japan and

MARY Oh! You all mix up

Okay, Islanders! Time t

business cuz today we s

Haoles. See da fancy fit

Haole outtrigger. We get

Wood! Heavy but! So w

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UIVA *(Gives Samoan chee*

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we will see, how lovely heaven can be.

DAD Brenda Jeannie? Brenda Jeannie?

BRENDA Yes, Daddy ?

DAD Hate to disturb your meditation but we got a customer.

BRENDA Okay, Daddy. (Sound of the door unlocking)

NARRATOR There in the doorway . . . straw hat . . . red mumu . . . huge honey brown woman. Aunti Mary. The Beesas stop their chattering. Mom looks up. Baby bro stops. She moves to Big Mike . . .

MARY Auwe! You not make die dead yet, silly guy! Get up!

(Big Mike notices he's okay.)

MIKE Aunti Mary! Aunti Mary's here!

NARRATOR And she breezes past with a white plastic bucket filled with . . .

MARY Roses. Fresh picked by me dis morning. Da best time! Kings and Queens get Rose Gardens. I get da only rose garden on da Westside. Try smell. Sweet, huh? Folks come to Dave's Pharmacy to drink coffee, talk story and to smell my roses. Tbdy, Dave, I give you my best and you give me da kine high blood pressure medicine?

NARRATOR I take a rose (smells) . . .

BRENDA Wow!

Outrigger Regatta

NARRATOR A few days later, I'm on the boardwalk and I hear . . .

MARY Hey, the drug man's daughter! It's me! Aunti Mary! You here for the beeg regatta? Come meet our team - The Islanders: Smoke from Guam, Uiva from Samoa, Kali, Twila, my kids from Hawaii, Taji from Japan, Gloria from Puerto Rico, Morrie Goldbaum . . . Where you from Morrie Goldbaum!

MORRIE New York!

MARY Dat's right! We all from da islands. Brenda Jean, where you from?

BRENDA Well, my mom's family's from China, Mexico and Scotland and my dad's family's from Japan and Salt Lake.

MARY Oh! You all mix up! Chop Suey! Okay, Islanders! Time to get down to business cuz today we sailing against da Haoles. See da fancy fiber glass boats? Haole outrigger. We get da real ting here. Wood! Heavy but! So we got ta psyche 'em out! Uiva give 'em!

UIVA (Gives Samoan cheer. Roars:) Tasi, Lua,

Tolu, Fa. (Repeat) Ta lo fa! Ta lo fa! Uso! uso!

NARRATOR Bang! The boats are off and the race is on!

BRENDA (Clapping) Go Islanders! That was fun, Aunti Mary. I gotta go to work.

MARY Oh? Too bad you can't stay and eat. We get lomi lomi salmon, lau lau . . . ooh!

Da pork . . . ummmm! Good ting you don't want any. Go - go, go. Teriyaki chicken, hamburger, hot dogs for da keikis. You don't want any. Go. Go. Go!

BRENDA Vegetables . . . no vegetables.

MARY Wadamelon! We get wadamelon! Try catch!

(BRENDA catches.)

NARRATOR And Aunti Mary started to cook

...

MARY (Singing to the tune of "Breaking up is Hard to Do") Down, do bee do down, down. Come Ah, Come Ah! Down, do bee do down, down. Come Ah, Come Ah! Do be, Do be, Do, Do Ooh, do Do!

BRENDA Aunti Mary! All the other boats are in! They're pulling up the flags! They're going home! It's dark! (Wheeze!) I'm in big. (wheeze) My parents are gonna (wheeze!) . . .

MARY Oh, por ting! Breathe! Sit down. Breathe. Breathe. You get too much pilikia. Auwe! Breathe! Don't worry so much. I fix it wit your folks. But you got to breathe. Each breath your mana get more strong . . . People are like roses. Water a little, they get big. More wada, more big, til one day - Poof! They bloom! But you no breathe, you neva bloom.

Oh? See dat speck in the moonlight? Dat's dem. Quick, fan the ribs.

NARRATOR The canoe comes in and one Islander dives into the silvery waves. He's tall. Surfer shoulders. Cinnamon brown skin. Dark, glistening curls. He throws back his head and I see those eyes. . .

KALI How's it?

MARY Dis my son, Darren Kaalii Kahalapuinoa. You can call him Kali.

KALI I's hoping you's going stay. You like go body surf sometime?

BRENDA Okay.

Bodysurfing

NARRATOR A few days later . . .

BRENDA (Locks bathroom door. Mimes

putting on a bathing suit that's too tight.)
Mom's bathing suit ...
(Singing) Little surfer, little one. Make my
world come all undone. Do you love me?
Do you? Surfer girl. Surfer girl. Surfer
girl. *(Exits bathroom. She's at the beach.)*

Kali, Surf's up!
BRENDA Take off my glasses? I can't see.
Talk loud. You first. Here I come. Oooh!
(Shivering) This is fun! Way out there?
Okay. Okay. *(Propelled by the surf. Re-
enters water.)* Dive into the curl? Oh yeah!
Wee, this is fun!

KALI Now wait for da curl and just before
she breaks ride 'um in like ... Weeeee!!!
(He demonstrates very professionally.)

BRENDA I got it. I got it! *(Treading water)*
Now wait for the curl and just before ...
Not yet. Not yet. Too late! Wipe out! *(She
wipes out and begins to drown.)* I'm
drowning ... K-K-K-K-Kali! Help!

NARRATOR Big brown arms holding me up
and Kali says ...

KALI You know girl, ya gotta make friends
wit Mada Ocean. We do this everyday and
bumbye she let you swim.

The Rip

NARRATOR So the summer passed, the salt
water helped my eczema, the swimming
helped my asthma and I got thin ... ner.
On Kali's 14th birthday, we heard there
were six footers down on Huntington. So
we went there ...

BRENDA Kali, looks dangerous!
KALI Yeah! *(He dives in and swims with
strong, steady strokes.)*

BRENDA Oh no! He's caught in a rip!
Kali! Kali! Kali!

NARRATOR To a lifeguard ...

BRENDA My boyfriend's drowning.

NARRATOR It was the first time I said
"Boyfriend." I said it again.

BRENDA My boyfriend's drowning!

GUARD *(Mimes binoculars)* Looks Hawaiian.

BRENDA He is.

GUARD He's big.

BRENDA Yeah.

GUARD He'll make it.

BRENDA No! He's drowning. And he's my
boyfriend!

Kali! Kali! Kali!

NARRATOR Finally the rip plays out and
Kali swims to the shore. *(Mimes swim-
ming)* He stumbles onto the beach.

KALI Hey, girl, how come you no call da
lifeguard?

BRENDA I did! I did! You okay?

KALI Gee, girl ... funny kine. I like almost
drown! ... On da Island da old folks say
da fisherman will always make it home
when his wahine is waiting ... you saved
me!

Birthday Luau

NARRATOR That night Aunti Mary gave a
big luau for Kali's birthday. Kali and
Smoke had stayed up all the night before
making kalua pig. They dug the pit right
in the middle of her rose garden.

SMOKE So, Brenda, this is what we call an
imu.

NARRATOR It's Smoke, Kali's skinny
Guamanian buddy.

SMOKE Feel these rocks - they're warm,
but underneath they're hot. That's what
cooks the pig and when it comes out it's
gonna be good!

NARRATOR *(Makes flip-flop sound)* Kali, in
his ancient rubber thongs. He's carrying a
shovel in each hand.

KALI Smoke, brah. Come on. Take da rocks
off.

SMOKE Yah, okay Kali. I'll be right wit you.
So Bren, me and Kali been doing this
kalua pig thing since his ninth birthday.
Kali and me, we're tight. Ain't that right,
bro?

NARRATOR Smoke practically lives with
Kali and Aunti Mary. I don't know what
happened to his folks but he lives with
his uncle, who he doesn't get along with.
So Smoke's here all the time.

SMOKE You know, when I was small,
before my folks died, we lived down the
street. I'd seen Kali, but I didn't know
him. But my mom, she was friends with
Aunti Mary. At the funeral, Aunti Mary
gave me a big hug and said "Come visit."
And I never left. Ain't that right, Kali?

NARRATOR But Kali's not paying attention.
He's shoveling hot rocks.

SMOKE Man, you don't never listen to me.

KALI Come on, brah. Take the rocks off.

SMOKE Okay! I'm takin' the rocks off. See,
man, I'm takin the rocks off!

KALI Smoke, watch where you're trowin'
dose rocks before you ... Owwww!

BRENDA Kali, you're bleeding! Aunti Mary,
Aunti Mary!!

MARY Keeds! ... Kali!

SMOKE It was an accident! I was t
rocks off and I just got really int

KALI You got into it alright! Jump
around like a monkey.

SMOKE A monkey, man! You calli
monkey, man?! How you gonna
a monkey when you hangin' out
Rash!

BRENDA The Rash? You calling r
Rash?! Kali, he called me The R

KALI Smoke man, don't be callin
no rash. What's up wit chu any
me and you, brah.

SMOKE No it's not! Now it's you
You ain't got no time for me!

MARY Ow! We get hurt feelings!
stop it already wid da stink eye

Brenda - we're "Ohana" - fami

NARRATOR And Aunti Mary hug
scrawny little boy to her huge
Kali says ...

KALI Come on, brah, ain't no b
Let's get da pig out.

SMOKE I'm wit chu bro. I'm wi
NARRATOR Ding! Dong!

MARY Oh! Here come da Island
Tbji! Morrie! Come in. Eh Birt

you and Smoke - hurry up! T
NARRATOR Kali and I ate tons

that sweet, smokey meat. The
collapsed.

KALI Hey, girl? Big 14. Almost
Da sky's the limit! *(shaka)*

NARRATOR As we lay there in
garden ... the only rose garc
Westside ... I could still feel
of the waves ... Kali, smelli
clean, gave me my first kiss
thought ...

BRENDA I LOVE kalua pig!
(Lights out)

Part 2: School Daze

Lit. 1 vs. Twelve o'Clock

NARRATOR It's 1968. Kali and
going steady. The first day
we're bussed out of the We:
the bridge. Over the FLOO:
to: Long Beach Polytechnic
"Enter to Learn, Go forth t
cyclone fence, huge concre
on the quad 3,000 kids. Ka
find my class, straightens)

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KALI You got into it alright! Jumpin'
around like a monkey.

SMOKE A monkey, man! You callin' me a
monkey, man?!! How you gonna call me
a monkey when you hangin' out with The
Rash!

BRENDA The Rash? You calling me The
Rash?! Kali, he called me The Rash!

KALI Smoke man, don't be callin' Brenda
no rash. What's up wit chu anyway? It's
me and you, brah.

SMOKE No it's not! Now it's you and her!
You ain't got no time for me!

MARY Ow! We get hurt feelings! Smoke,
stop it already wid da stink eye. You, Kali,
Brenda - we're "Ohana" - family.

NARRATOR And Aunti Mary hugged that
scrawny little boy to her huge bosom and
Kali says . . .

KALI Come on, brah, ain't no big ting.
Let's get da pig out.

SMOKE I'm wit chu bro. I'm wit chu . . .

NARRATOR Ding! Dong!

MARY Oh! Here come da Islanders! Uiva,
Tbji! Morrie! Come in. Eh Birtday Boy,
you and Smoke - hurry up! Time fo eat!

NARRATOR Kali and I ate tons and tons of
that sweet, smokey meat. Then we
collapsed.

KALI Hey, girl? Big 14. Almost a man, ah?
Da sky's the limit! *(shaka)*

NARRATOR As we lay there in Aunti Mary's
garden . . . the only rose garden on the
Westside . . . I could still feel the rhythm
of the waves . . . Kali, smelling fresh and
clean, gave me my first kiss and I
thought . . .

BRENDA I LOVE kalua pig!
(Lights out)

Part 2: School Daze

Lit. 1 vs. Twelve o'Clock High

NARRATOR It's 1968. Kali and I are now
going steady. The first day of high school,
we're bussed out of the Westside. Across
the bridge. Over the FLOOD CONTROL
to: Long Beach Polytechnic High School
"Enter to Learn, Go forth to Serve." Poly -
cyclone fence, huge concrete buildings -
on the quad 3,000 kids. Kali helps me
find my class, straightens my glasses,

kisses me good-bye and disappears down
the hall.

(KALI gives Westside whistle.)

I go inside. Take a seat. No Westsiders.
The Bell rings. In front of me, this white
guy. Not like Morrie Goldbaum or Big
Mike but really white.

STEVEN Hi there!

NARRATOR He's handsome. With wavy
brown hair and green eyes. Like a
Kennedy!

STEVEN I'm Steve Newcomb and this is my
girlfriend Sherry.

NARRATOR Sherry - sky blue dress, golden
hair. She smiles at me.

BRENDA I wanna be her friend.

NARRATOR Then the teacher walks to the
front of the class.

JUDY Class, I'm Judy, Judy Sloane. But in
this class, I hope you'll call me Judy. Oh!
Look at you! Look at you! You're nervous!
Of course! You're sitting here in Lit. 1,
the gifted class, thinking, "Oh my god!
Am I gifted?" Don't worry. You are. Now,
most of you know each other but there's
one person I know you don't know
because she just got here. Hai Nyugen
from Viet Nam. Welcome, Hai!

HAI *(With a French accent)* In Viet Nam, I
read Cyrano de Bergerac, Les Misérables
et Madame Bovary. I look forward to
reading the literature in your great
tongue.

JUDY Thank you, Hai. If there's one thing
I want us all to learn, it's how to live
together in peace. So this semester I've
decided, we're going to study Utopian
literature. Utopia. Does anyone know
what that means? Tommy? A ride at
Disneyland? No. That's Autopia. Utopia is
a place where people live together in
harmony. Your first reading assignment
for the semester: Aldous Huxley's *Brave
New World*. Class dismissed! Brenda? Can
I speak to you for a minute, please?

Brenda, I think Hai could use a friend.

BRENDA Why me? I'm not Vietnamese.

JUDY But you're Oriental! Put yourself in
her place. You're in a new country. No
friends . . .

NARRATOR So everyday, I sat next to Hai
trying to dress and act so that everyone
knew I was not like her - F.O.B. Fresh
Off the Boat.

After school . . .

BRENDA Kali!! I loved my classes. Judy,

that's my teacher. We just call her that. She's like a real person. Well, how were your classes?

KALI I don't wanna talk about it.

BRENDA Why not? Who's in 'em?

KALI Smoke. Da kine Westside guys.

BRENDA I was wondering where everybody went! What'd ya do?

KALI I don't wanna talk about it.

BRENDA Why not?

KALI No more. 'Nuff already! (Pause) I'm not retarded.

BRENDA What?

KALI Not, 'kay? Not! I'm in da kine Twelve o'Clock High.

BRENDA What! Why?! You're not dumb! You just sleep in class. You can't help it. You work at night.

KALI I said, I don't wanna talk about it! Pau already! (Pause)

I hate working at Curry's. Bus deeshes. Take out trash. Da boss. He tinks I'm Mexican. "Tell da Mexican kid to wash the toilets." Pilau!

My mada's grandfada, was da highest chief in Kauai! We come from royalty. Dey don't know who I am! Dey don't never know who I am!

Dis class, dis Twelve o'Clock High, dat's for losers, play checkers, read gung fu magazines. Today we get one guest lecture: army recruit guy! Junk! Dey wish dey could forget about us. Dey wish we would just disappear.

Sherry

NARRATOR Sherry, her boyfriend Steve Newcomb and I had become friends. One weekend Sherry invited me to her parents house for a garden party . . .

SHERRY Brenda! I'm so glad you're here. No one from the Westside has ever been over before. Don't tell my mom where you're from. Okay? It's no big deal. Just don't.

I love your hair. It's so ethnic. Mine just kinda hangs here. You know who's gorgeous? Your boyfriend! God, he is so sexy! I love the way he walks. But I can't understand him. Can he speak English? Hey? You guys on B.C.? You know - Birth Control? You mean you're not using anything?

BRENDA We're not doing anything. We love each other.

SHERRY Oh, God! That's SO ROMANTIC!

Steven wouldn't stay with me for a second if he couldn't screw me. Com'ere, let's have some fun tonight. Let me dress you. Please! Come here. (She opens closets.) All these old clothes! AAAHH! Yellow? No, no. Make you look sour. Orange? No. Red? Too bold. Green! Try it!

BRENDA Wow, store bought green satin.

SHERRY Keep it!

BRENDA Oh, no. I couldn't. It's too nice.

SHERRY It's you or Good Will.

BRENDA Oh . . . Thanks . . .

NARRATOR That night . . . La la la la . . . la la la (Singing *Brandenburg No. 5*)

The garden filled with tiny little lights. Jasmine. Gardenias. And pink Chinese lanterns swaying in the breeze. La la la la la . . . All the people so refined and elegant. Sherry smiled and smiled at me. And I felt like a princess. La! LA! (Sings a *Smokey Robinson* type doo-wop song as transition)

Westside Warriors

NARRATOR On the weekdays I was a model minority. But on Friday nights I was a Westside Warrior. We had graduated from The Islanders. My homegirls and I would - (Mimes the following: *Eye shadow, lipstick. Mean looks. Putting on fishnet stockings. Stuffing bra. High heels. Rats hair. Hair spray. Dances. Snaps.*) And Honey, we were ready!

We'd go down to homeboy Smoke's garage. Rug samples on the cement - wall to wall. Over here's an old couch that everyone likes to make out on. And back there is a naugahyde armchair that no one likes cuz when you move on it, it sounds like this: (farting sounds.) Over here's a lamp with a tee shirt on it to keep the lights low and back there me and the girls would spin 45s and talk about . . .

HOMEGIRLS (Singing) Nothin' you could do could make me untrue . . .

NARRATOR And this is where one day I bring my new friend, Sherry. As our guest, my homegirls give her the naugahyde arm chair.

SHERRY (Fart sounds as she sits) I'm honored. So this is the "inner sanctum." (fart, fart) Well, where are the "Homeboys"?

NARRATOR At this very moment waiting, in black jackets with "V" embroidered in blue on the back the middle. Smoke to his right. waiting . . . for the Corner Boys (WARRIORS whistle street signal.)

KALI Get 'em.

(WARRIORS fight choreography)

NARRATOR The garage door ope Smoke . . . and Kali with a big head. All the girls run to me .

HOMEGIRLS Brenda! Look at yo Look at your ole man!

NARRATOR I say . . .

(BRENDA has asthma attack.)

NARRATOR But Sherry says . . .

SHERRY Kali! We've got to get y hospital . . .

KALI What she doing here?

SHERRY Kali, if my presence o I'll leave. But first I really thi oughta get that head looked a right outside and . . .

NARRATOR All of us said "Car? that Sherry was cool.

And this is where we learn lady" thing: Wipe off the bloc and the dirt. Get the men so drink. Listen to their war sto

GIRL 1 God, you're tough.

GIRL 2 You should've seen my think his nose is busted.

GIRL 3 Honey that ain't nothi man got cut!

GIRL 2 Wow!

NARRATOR . . . turn up the hi the lights and (singing the M OOOOH! OOO-OOOOHHH! Kali smiles and he only smi dances or fights. We dance.

KALI (Sings)

You're my past, you're my) my future, GIRL!!

One day, one sweet day, w And we'll live togedda, fo'e Like da wada to da sea . . .

BRENDA Kali, say "water."

KALI (Singing) Like da wada

BRENDA Kali, do you have t the time? Say, "water."

KALI Wada.

BRENDA No. WAAH-TER.

KALI WAAH-DAAH!

BRENDA Say, "I'd like a glas TER, please."

KALI Mo' betta, I get da wa

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(Singing) Nothin' you could do
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 And this is where one day I
 new friend, Sherry. As our
 homegirls give her the nau-
 m chair.
 irt sounds as she sits) I'm
 So this is the "inner sanctum."
 Well, where are the
 rs"?

NARRATOR At this very moment they're
 waiting, in black jackets with "Warriors"
 embroidered in blue on the back. Kali's in
 the middle. Smoke to his right. They're
 waiting ... for the Corner Boys ...
(WARRIORS whistle street signal.)

KALI Get 'em.

(WARRIORS fight choreography)

NARRATOR The garage door opens. Enter
 Smoke ... and Kali with a big gash in his
 head. All the girls run to me ...

HOMEGIRLS Brenda! Look at your ole man!
 Look at your ole man!

NARRATOR I say ...

(BRENDA has asthma attack.)

NARRATOR But Sherry says ...

SHERRY Kali! We've got to get you to a
 hospital ...

KALI What she doing here?

SHERRY Kali, if my presence offends you,
 I'll leave. But first I really think we
 oughta get that head looked at. My car's
 right outside and ...

NARRATOR All of us said "Car?" And after
 that Sherry was cool.

And this is where we learned the "ole
 lady" thing: Wipe off the blood, the sweat
 and the dirt. Get the men something to
 drink. Listen to their war stories ...

GIRL 1 God, you're tough.

GIRL 2 You should've seen my ole man. I
 think his nose is busted.

GIRL 3 Honey that ain't nothin'. My ole
 man got cut!

GIRL 2 Wow!

NARRATOR ... turn up the hi-fi, turn down
 the lights and *(singing the Miracles' tune)*
 OOOOH! OOO-OOOHHH! La la la la ...
 Kali smiles and he only smiles when he
 dances or fights. We dance.

KALI *(Sings)*

You're my past, you're my present, you're
 my future, GIRL!!

One day, one sweet day, we will bee-e-ee!

And we'll live togedda, fo'evah ...

Like da wada to da sea ...

BRENDA Kali, say "water."

KALI *(Singing)* Like da wada to da sea!!!

BRENDA Kali, do you have to talk pidgin all
 the time? Say, "water."

KALI Wada.

BRENDA No. WAAH-TER.

KALI WAAH-DAAH!

BRENDA Say, "I'd like a glass of WAAH-
 TER, please."

KALI Mo' betta, I get da wada myself den

waste my breaf asking.

BRENDA Do you want to be in Twelve
 O'Clock High forever? If you don't learn
 how to speak good English, you'll never
 graduate!

KALI Some folks, need odder people
 graduate 'dem. Me, I graduate myself!
(Singing) Like da WAAH-DAAH to da sea

...

Hey, girl! Your skin, someting funny
 kine!

BRENDA What? Is it my eczema?

KALI *(Shrugs)* It's white.

BRENDA It's rash.

KALI But it's white!

BRENDA So?

KALI You're turning Haole! *(laughs)*

NARRATOR *(Sound of farting)* Out of the
 corner of my eye, I see Sherry and
 Smoke - like totally making out! She's
 taking down her spaghetti straps. She has
 no bra! He's taking off his belt! Oh my
 god, are they just gonna? ...

Boom! Boom! Boom!

HOMEGIRLS The CORNER BOYS!! Run!!

NARRATOR The Corner Boys are older.
 Maybe 20. They don't work. They don't
 go to school. They're career guys! WE
 RUN! *(Acts out chase scene)* Through the
 park. Past graffiti that says "Westside
 Rules. Corner Boys are chumps!" Me and
 Sherry are falling behind. We're last. I'm
 last. Oh, my god! The fence! Sherry
 WHOOM! She's over. Me ...

BRENDA Kali! Kali! I'm stuck!!

NARRATOR My fishnets are caught in the
 chainlink fence and I'm thinking ...

BRENDA What am I doing here?

NARRATOR But Sherry says ...

SHERRY *(Mispronouncing)* Que Viva!

Westside!! *(Sherry screams in excitement.)*

The Riot

BROTHER BROWN Brothers and Sisters!
 This is Squeaky Brown and the Black
 Panthers have liberated this High
 School!

NARRATOR Detroit, Newark, Watts ... On
 the quad - On this side: frat boys,
 cheerleaders, Lit. 1.A - all white. On this
 side: wood shop, Twelve O'clock High,
 Westside Warriors - all the rest.

As if in a dream I walk through the
 quad - like Moses parting the Red Sea -
 and as I get to the other side, like two

huge tidal waves, three thousand kids run towards each other and all hell breaks loose!

I see Sherry getting her head bashed into a pole by two black girls.

SHERRY Stop it! Stop it!

NARRATOR Then someone grabs me, twists my arm, pries open my hand and in red indelible Marks-a-Lot writes "WS": Westside. It's Smoke.

SMOKE Flash dis to any homies who try an' mess wif you.

NARRATOR Then these two white guys push me. Knock me to the ground and I hear ...

STEVEN Wait! Stop! She's in my Lit. class.

NARRATOR It's Steve Newcomb. He gives me his frat ring.

STEVEN Show this to any white people who try and bother you.

NARRATOR I walk through the quad. I'm cool ... Westside. I'm a soc ... Phi Gam. Westside. Phi Gam. (*Mimes repeat of line as flashes ring or palm*)

BR. BROWN Brothers and Sisters!

Remember, you are part of the solution or part of the problem. The choice is yours!

The Newcomb Dynasty

JUDY Class, after the events of the last few days, I know many of you are hurt, shocked, angered! And suddenly I realize that Poly, our own high school, is part of a larger picture. And I just had to say "Judy, forget the core curriculum! Get real!" I want each of you to pick partners and come up with an analysis of the underlying causes of this riot. Class dismissed.

NARRATOR Steven was my partner. So I went to his house. My god, it was a mansion!

STEVEN Okay, Brenda! Okay! I understand how frustrating it must be to be in woodshop and Twelve o'clock High but violence is never a viable option! I need a break. How 'bout a brownie?

NARRATOR So we take some brownies into the Newcomb family library. A room filled with huge painted portraits of the Newcomb patriarchy. Steven and I sit down on a burgundy velvet, Edwardian couch.

BRENDA Oh, Steven, what lovely little pillows!

STEVEN Brenda, that's what's so special about you - you know, you're really different ... from those others. I mean from those other Westsiders.

BRENDA Really? ...

STEVEN Definitely!

NARRATOR And one of the paintings starts to talk to me ...

GRANDPA A little cherry blossom!

Welcome to the bosom of the Newcomb dynasty.

BRENDA Steven, your Grandfather's talking to me.

NARRATOR And Steven says ...

STEVEN Marijuana in the brownies. Yuummm!

NARRATOR And he puts his arm around me ...

BRENDA A Kennedy. Hmmm. But geez, he's hairy. He's gonna kiss me. Relax, be sensual. That nose. How do you get around the nose? (*Mimes*) EEEE! He stuck his tongue in my mouth. Eu, Gross!

NARRATOR And all the other paintings say,

PAINTINGS "Aaaaa!" (*Tongue action*)

BRENDA No! No! No! (*Spin out*)

NARRATOR When I came to, all the paintings were quietly hanging on the wall and Steven was sitting there staring at me.

STEVEN Geez, Brenda, I'm really sorry. I didn't know the brownies were that powerful. I'm just blowin' it since Sherry left me. I'm tripping out.

BRENDA Steven, I'm really hungry.

NARRATOR Later Steven drives me to the pharmacy. As we go inside, I see on the counter: lumpia, tamales and a fresh bunch of Aunti Mary's red, red, roses. Today's trades for medicine. My kid brother pedals up to Steven. My little sisters come out from behind the counters and surround him. Dad comes down too and shakes his hand. They're all standing there in Mom's matching clothes ... looking like a bunch of refugees!!! So I say to Steven ...

BRENDA Steven! I'll see you tomorrow!

Kali Fights Steven

BRENDA So in conclusion, Steven and I disagree about the causes of the riot. Although I do not personally condone it, violence is a form of ...

NARRATOR There, in the doorway in his black Warrior jacket. He towards Steven's desk. He's sn lifts up Steven and wham! (*HAI screams*)

NARRATOR It's Hai, the F.O.B. f Nam.

KALI He's okay, I just like tea take care of our own.

(*HAI Wails*)

KALI What's wrong with her?

(*HAI Wails*)

KALI Wot da hell she saying?

BRENDA Kali! Get out! Just get

NARRATOR Later, I wait for Ka locker. As soon as I see that jacket ...

BRENDA You big, stupid moron! do that for?

KALI Cuz he's messin' wit you wrong with him? Is he a fag? thought he'd fight for you. I I put myself on da line for y and you just t'row it in my ! hanging out wit so many Ha forget you from da Westside

BRENDA Who cares about the What's so cool about busting and freaking out some poor not gonna be on the Westside getting out of here. I'm goin

KALI Wot? You tink you can daddy get dat kine kala wit Shhh!

BRENDA Did you hear what going to college!

KALI (*Pause*) Hey, girl, I telli all da kine on da Westside married.

BRENDA Married? I'm not go fat mama in a muumuu w welfare check! You don't ge You're always talking about limit. We live on the Wests oil fields! The sky comes u (*Gestures to her throat*) Kali

NARRATOR And he turned a away. And I just stood the Warrior written on the bac get smaller and smaller ... disappeared ...

Intermission

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Aaaaa!" (*Tongue action*)
No! No! (*Spin out*)
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en ...
ven! I'll see you tomorrow!

Steven

in conclusion, Steven and I
out the causes of the riot.
do not personally condone it,
a form of ...

NARRATOR There, in the doorway ... Kali
in his black Warrior jacket. He moves
towards Steven's desk. He's smiling. He
lifts up Steven and wham!

(*HAI screams*)

NARRATOR It's Hai, the F.O.B. from Viet
Nam.

KALI He's okay, I just like teach him - we
take care of our own.

(*HAI Wails*)

KALI What's wrong with her?

(*HAI Wails*)

KALI Wot da hell she saying?

BRENDA Kali! Get out! Just get out!

NARRATOR Later, I wait for Kali at his
locker. As soon as I see that black Warrior
jacket ...

BRENDA You big, stupid moron. What'd you
do that for?

KALI Cuz he's messin' wit you. What's
wrong with him? Is he a faggot or wot? I
thought he'd fight for you. I fight for you.
I put myself on da line for you alla time
and you just t'row it in my face. You
hanging out wit so many Haoles, you
forget you from da Westside!

BRENDA Who cares about the Westside?
What's so cool about busting up a class
and freaking out some poor F.O.B.? I'm
not gonna be on the Westside forever. I'm
getting out of here. I'm going to college.

KALI Wot? You tink you can fly? Your
daddy get dat kine kala wit six kids?
Shhh!

BRENDA Did you hear what I said, I'm
going to college!

KALI (*Pause*) Hey, girl, I tellin' Smoke and
all da kine on da Westside we getting
married.

BRENDA Married? I'm not gonna be some
fat mama in a muumuu waiting for a
welfare check! You don't get it do you?
You're always talking about the sky's the
limit. We live on the Westside. Next to the
oil fields! The sky comes up to here!
(*Gestures to her throat*) Kali, we're pau.

NARRATOR And he turned and walked
away. And I just stood there watching the
Warrior written on the back of his jacket
get smaller and smaller ... until it
disappeared ...

Intermission

Part 3: The Teacher

College

NARRATOR Well, I went to college. Thank
God for EOP - the Ethnic Opportunity
Program. Sherry turned me on to higher
education but I went and she didn't. She
had Smoke's baby in her senior year,
dropped out and moved in with him.

DAD Why are you leaving us? Mama and
me, we need you! You're the Onesan. If
you get too smart, no one will marry you!

NARRATOR THE CAMPUS: Clean fresh air!
And the sky! It went on and on. Right
down to the ocean. Big picture windows
overlooking the redwoods. I felt AWFUL!
- Leaving mom with all those kids ... I
was worried about who was taking my
place at the store and actually - I stuck
out miserably.

STUDENT Excuse me, but we're leading a
student directed seminar on racial
injustice. We'd like you to be a guest
lecturer. Please? The only way to bridge
the gap between the rich and the poor is
for people like you to teach people like
us. We need you. You're Third World.

The Demise of Dave's Pharmacy

NARRATOR Ring. Ring.

MAMA Hello Brenda Jean. This is your
mama. I just want to tell you the news.
Medirex is opening one of its stores right
across the street from Daddy's. Um-hum
... Well, here's the news! The new owner
offered to buy Dave's Pharmacy and set
Daddy up as the manager of Medirex. It'd
be just like having our own store without
the headaches! Here's Dad.

DAD Well, Brenda Jean. Guess I gotta be
like everybody else and get a job. You
want to come help?

NARRATOR So we moved: our medicine,
our coke machine and all our customers.
We stood there in the empty shell of our
store, "Dave's Pharmacy" ... and watched
Dad march into Medirex.

The boss's name was Buzzy, like a
killer bee.

BUZZY Hey, surprise yeah? I'm a head.
Long hair. Work in cut-offs, sandals. I was
into acid. Now I'm dealing drugs! Hah!
Hah! Hah!

NARRATOR Bzzz, bzzz, bzzz.

BUZZY Hey Dave, this is a place of business. So, tell the lovely wife to take her delicious banana bread, her adorable kids and go home.

NARRATOR Buzz, Buzz, Buzz.

BUZZY Hey Dave - if they ain't buyin, we're dyin ... Ah geez, not again! Get off the floor ya retard!

MARY He no retard. Mike gid up. Dave, today Aunti Mary bring you her sweetest roses. Try smell!

BUZZY NOOOOO! There you go again! I can't believe it! Flowers for medicine ... I need cash, cash, cash, cash, MONEY! Dave, you're fired!

DAD Fired? You can't fire me. This is my store! That's my coke machine ... These are all my customers.

BUZZY From now one we'll just think of this as Dave's Pharmacy without Dave.
(DAVE stands there confused.)

Twelve o'Clock High

NARRATOR "Death to the Birds of Prey that feed on the blood of the people!" reads a poster above my desk. I'm back in high school. Teaching. I dropped out of college and got a special certificate to teach here, cuz no one else would.

BRENDA I'm Brenda Aoki, but in this room you'll call me Brenda. This is Twelve o'Clock High, as you know, the class for the losers. Okay, let's cut the bullshit from the gate. I don't think you are losers. I don't think you are illiterate. What I think is ... you're lazy. You're lookin' at me like "How does this broad know what we think?" I know cuz I been there. I'm 20 years old. Not that much older than most of you. I'm from the Westside too. My Daddy worked hard all his life to support our family and he got beat up by the Man.

Now, I live above a whore house with a Vietnamese sister who was raped by the same capitalist, imperialist system that screwed my Daddy and keeps all of us (gestures) down. Your first reading assignment for the semester: Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Class dismissed.

Bobby? Bobby Panis! May I speak to you for a minute please? Miss Panis? Thank you. Bobby, I was wondering if you could you do me a favor and hang out with Debbie? She's like the only white

kid in the class and ... You're part Filipino and part white so ... Bobby, just do me that favor, alright?

BOBBY Hey, teach? Fuck off.

Rosie's Baby/Sherry's Fine

SHERRY Brenda! Don't be so hard on yourself. Tell me all about it.

NARRATOR And I'm hangin' with Sherry. Flame Red nails, two inches long, tight white pants with a thin gold belt, a tousled mane of Farrah Fawcett hair.

BRENDA Oh Sherry. It's so good to have somebody to talk to.

NARRATOR We sitting in the sun on Sherry's deck. Her little boy's happily babbling in his playpen. Sherry's living in this bougie condo - in P.V. Palos Verdes! Smoke must be doin' pretty good.

BRENDA Sherry, I just think I'm blowing it with these kids. I dunno ... like the other day. I dismiss the boys, and tell the girls we're gonna have a women's discussion, and that little witch, Bobby Panis, says ...

BOBBY But ain't chu a dyke?

BRENDA And they all crack up. Slappin' high fives and stuff.

SHERRY Well, you don't exactly look like a "homegirl". Let me do your hair. Please!

BRENDA Sherry! ... Anyway to divert their attention, I notice this one fat girl, who I really like, is all of a sudden skinny. So I say, "Rosie, you look great, what happened?"

ROSIE I had a baby.

BRENDA And they all crack up again. God Sherry, I had no idea she was even pregnant. Then I remember how Rosie used to wear this long coat even when it was really hot. Poor kid, she must have been so uncomfortable.

NARRATOR Sherry tosses her hair ...

SHERRY Well, you know the rule - Get pregnant, get kicked out of school ...

(Laughs)

SHERRY'S SON Out! Out! Out! (Calling from play pen)

NARRATOR Sherry's son raises his little arms.

SHERRY Brenda, it's all worth it. Huh? Baby Boy. Mama's baby boy.

NARRATOR I look down at Sherry's little boy wrapped snugly in his mama's arms with his caramel colored skin and curly blonde hair, and I think, "Yep, the little

prince. He's the future. Us co together living in peace."

Rosie's Story/Hai Survival

NARRATOR And every mornin roommate, Hai, yes Hai, the Lit. 1, who I now see as my struggle ... makes us Vietna coffee in two blue porcelain French!

HAI For you, Brenda and one Comment ça va?

BRENDA Oh, Hai. You always you?

NARRATOR And I tell Hai all happened in class with my discussion.

BRENDA And Rosie had to we coat, even when it was reall decide to be cool with them girls, "Listen, if any of you { pregnant, I swear, I'll never And they go ...

GIRLS Really? You won't? AA

BRENDA And they're all preg Bobby Panis who's skinny a the class just busts wide op girls are all asking Rosie ab Did it hurt? And was her b God Hai, you oughta see he This big macho gangster - ' Rosie says ...

ROSIE When Bullet saw his I cried!

NARRATOR And all the girls GIRLS No!

ROSIE And he says we're go baby Luz: Light.

GIRLS OOOOHH!

ROSIE And Bullet says we're married.

GIRLS (Sob. Sob.)

HAI You'd be surprised at w to survive. When I left Vie was not enough room on t both my sister and me. (Pa captain liked me and I hac he kept liking me.

BRENDA What happened to

HAI These teacups are all t family.

BRENDA Oh God, Hai. I'm s your family.

HAI I love you, Brenda.

BRENDA I love you too, Ha

class and . . . You're part
nd part white so . . . Bobby, just
at favor, alright?
r, teach? Fuck off.

aby/Sherry's Fine

enda! Don't be so hard on
Tell me all about it.

And I'm hangin' with Sherry.
l nails, two inches long, tight
ts with a thin gold belt, a
ane of Farrah Fawcett hair.

1 Sherry. It's so good to have
to talk to.

We sitting in the sun on
eck. Her little boy's happily
n his playpen. Sherry's living in
e condo - in P.V. Palos Verdes!
ist be doin' pretty good.

erry, I just think I'm blowing it
kids. I dunno . . . like the
I dismiss the boys, and tell the
gonna have a women's discus-
iat little witch, Bobby Panis,

ain't chu a dyke?

d they all crack up. Slappin'
and stuff.

ll, you don't exactly look like a
Let me do your hair. Please!
erry! . . . Anyway to divert their
I notice this one fat girl, who I
is all of a sudden skinny. So I
, you look great, what hap-

a baby.

d they all crack up again. God
ad no idea she was even
Then I remember how Rosie
ar this long coat even when it
hot. Poor kid, she must have
comfortable.

Sherry tosses her hair . . .
l, you know the rule - Get
get kicked out of school . . .

Out! Out! Out! (*Calling from*

Sherry's son raises his little arms.
ada, it's all worth it. Huh?
Mama's baby boy.

look down at Sherry's little
d snuggly in his mama's arms
amel colored skin and curly
, and I think, "Yep, the little

prince. He's the future. Us coming
together living in peace."

Rosie's Story/Hai Survives

NARRATOR And every morning my
roommate, Hai, yes Hai, the F.O.B from
Lit. 1, who I now see as my sister in the
struggle . . . makes us Vietnamese style
coffee in two blue porcelain teacups.
French!

HAI For you, Brenda and one for me.
Comment ça va?

BRENDA Oh, Hai. You always know, don't
you?

NARRATOR And I tell Hai all about what
happened in class with my women's
discussion.

BRENDA And Rosie had to wear this long
coat, even when it was really hot. So I
decide to be cool with them. I say to the
girls, "Listen, if any of you guys gets
pregnant, I swear, I'll never turn you in."
And they go . . .

GIRLS Really? You won't? AAHHHH!!

BRENDA And they're all pregnant! Except
Bobby Panis who's skinny as a rail. Then
the class just busts wide open and the
girls are all asking Rosie about her labor.
Did it hurt? And was her boyfriend there.
God Hai, you oughta see her boyfriend.
This big macho gangster - "Bullet". And
Rosie says . . .

ROSIE When Bullet saw his little baby, he
cried!

NARRATOR And all the girls say . . .

GIRLS No!

ROSIE And he says we're gonna name the
baby Luz: Light.

GIRLS OOOOHH!

ROSIE And Bullet says we're getting
married.

GIRLS (*Sob. Sob.*)

HAI You'd be surprised at what people do
to survive. When I left Viet Nam, there
was not enough room on the boat for
both my sister and me. (*Pause*) But the
captain liked me and I had to make sure
he kept liking me.

BRENDA What happened to your sister?

HAI These teacups are all that's left of my
family.

BRENDA Oh God, Hai. I'm so sorry. I'll be
your family.

HAI I love you, Brenda.

BRENDA I love you too, Hai.

HAI I do not mean it like that. I mean . . .
I love you.

Dinner with Father

DAD Bless this food we're about to eat to
the use of our bodies.

NARRATOR It's another Sunday dinner with
the folks. Dad's at the head of the table
saying grace.

DAD Thank you for our health. Thank you
for my wonderful family. We ask you to
bring us a quick victory in Viet Nam so
cousins Larry, Dickie and Bobby can
come home. Amen.

MOM AND KIDS Amen, amen, amen,
amen, amen, amen . . .

DAD Brenda Jean? Say Amen.

BRENDA I'm not gonna ask God to help us
murder people. Especially people who
look just like us!

DAD Brenda Jean, tonight we will have a
nice, peaceful, family dinner. Is that
understood?

BRENDA Fine.

MOM Well, Beesas!

NARRATOR It's Mom.

MOM What did you do today?

BEESA 1 We can't tell you. Cuz Brenda
Jean said she'd kill us if we told
you.

BEESA 2 Ho! Ho! Ho Chi Min! NLF is
gonna win! We're gonna be on the 6:00
News, Mama!!!

BEESA 1 AND 2 Ho! Ho! Ho Chi Min! NLF
is gonna . . .

DAD Wait! Stop! Not at this table! We are
Americans!! Brenda Jean! What kind of
example are you setting for these kids?
You're the onesan. I never seen such a
bitter perverse person. You hate every-
body! White people! Rich people! Buzzy!
Forget the store! Dave's Pharmacy is dead!
I love working at Lucky's! Mama's thrilled
with her job at the cafeteria! So what
happened to you? You used to be so
sweet. Now, look at you! You buy every-
thing at the Army Surplus. What are you,
a soldier? What's wrong with looking like
a girl? And why are you wasting all that
money on rent? You got money to throw
around, throw it at your family. It's that
Vietnamese room mate. She's perverting
you. I want you to move back home right
now.

BRENDA Home? This doesn't feel like

home. Hai's more family than you are!
 DAD I am your father!
 BRENDA So?
 DAD Move home or you are no longer part
 of this family!
 BRENDA Fine!

Rosie's Dilemma

NARRATOR A few months after the break
 with my family, Hai's cooking dinner -
 Vietnamese style beef noodle soup with
 cilantro. Uuummm! When Rosie comes
 by ...
 BRENDA Rosie! Luz! Come in. Want some
 soup?
 (ROSIE looks like she's about to cry.)
 BRENDA What's wrong?
 ROSIE I miss my mom, my brothers. I
 can't stand living like this. One minute
 Bullet's such a good Daddy and the next,
 he's out on the street getting fucked up
 with the boys. I can't stand it. Always
 watching your back. Hitting the ground
 everytime a car backfires. I don't want to
 live like this. It's not good for the baby.
 (LUZ gurgles)
 ROSIE I love Bullet.
 (LUZ gurgles)
 ROSIE I know he's your daddy.
 (LUZ gurgles)
 ROSIE We're family por vida. But he says
 he can't live without his homeboys. They
 back each other up. He couldn't survive
 without them.
 NARRATOR I'm thinkin', "God, this could'a
 been me n' Kali ..." So I say ...
 BRENDA Rosie, he's a father now. He's got
 to grow up. And you, you're smart. You
 could be somebody. Tell Bullet. It's you or
 his boys. He loves you. He can change.
 ROSIE You know, sometimes I think about
 me and Bullet living in a place that's
 quiet at night. Where we can take Luz to
 the park and not worry about getting
 blown away.

Kali Returns

NARRATOR A few days later, on the street

(KALI gives Westside whistle.)
 BRENDA Kali! It's been ...
 KALI Four years, tree months, two days ...
 BRENDA You look great. You're a man!
 KALI (He scans her.) You too.

BRENDA Yeah, well ... What ya been up
 to? You married?
 KALI You like go out tonight?
 BRENDA Hai! I'm going out tonight! Kali -
 remember him?! (Undresses while singing
 Sly Stone's "Different Strokes") "There is the
 black one," - army boots. "Who won't
 accept the red one," - fatigues. "for living
 with the white one," - Mao jacket. Che
 Beret. "Different strokes for different
 folks." Swsss! (Takes shower) "And so on
 and so on and scooby, dooby, doo wa ..."
 (Washes hair)
 Hai? Remember Kali? He's the guy
 who freaked ya out in High school. He
 gave me my first kiss. "We gotta live
 together!" (Swsh! Opens closet door, looks)
 Thank you Sherry for the ole green satin!
 "And so on and so on and ..." (Unlocks
 door) Well, how do I look? Do I look like
 a woman?

HAI The most woman.
 NARRATOR And even though it's evening,
 Hai makes us Vietnamese style coffee in
 two blue porcelain teacups.
 HAI For you Brenda, and one for me.
 (Pause) So, you want to be Vietnamese ...
 BRENDA What?
 HAI If you end up with Kali you'll be like
 the women back home ...
 BRENDA Which is?
 HAI Plant the rice, make the babies, feed
 the men, and run.
 BRENDA God, Hai, you are so full of cheer.
 HAI If you have to have a man, find a
 rich, white man.
 NARRATOR Ding-Dong. Kali's standing
 there, in a white Italian silk suit, with a
 bunch of red, red roses. Big as cabbages.
 KALI From Mama. She say, "No forget your
 Aunti Mary."
 NARRATOR He turns to Hai ...
 KALI Hum nai angh Guayahum? ...
 NARRATOR Hai turns, walks to her room
 and slams the door.
 BRENDA Kali, what'd you say to her?
 KALI I thought I said "How ya doing?"

Kali Comes Courting

NARRATOR We get in his car. White
 Cadillac. White leather seats. (Singing
 Donny Hathaway's "Where is the Love")
 We're cruising PCH, Pacific Coast
 Highway. We pull up at the Five Crowns
 Restaurant.

KALI I like dis place. It's ono.
 NARRATOR This guy comes o
 my door.
 MAITRE D' Mr. K! How nice t
 HOSTESS Mr. K? The same ta
 WAITER Mr. K, tonight I'd rec
 prime rib or the lobster. Tak
 BRENDA Kali, this place is pr
 KALI You know Bren, I go by
 BRENDA (Laughs) Darren? I c
 Darren.
 KALI Okay. But only you can
 BRENDA Kali ... Look! We us
 surfing down there.
 KALI Yeah ... (Smiles) Hey? !
 folks?
 BRENDA (Shrugs) They're oka
 KALI You know, my very firs
 working at Dave's Pharmacy
 job. Folks would call your d
 what they needed and he'd
 with the deliveries. And tha
 do. I'm a "delivery boy."
 NARRATOR Oh! Oh! There is
 get involved with this guy?
 KALI Hey, Bren, I'm doin' ge
 in a village where I sit with
 My house, I wish you coul
 stilts over da wada. I get he
 my suit, throw on a malo, t
 the lanai and just watch the
 floating in the wada. And I
 now, you graduated.
 NARRATOR The meal's over.
 Kali and I stop to watch the
 KALI (sings) You're my past,
 pres ...
 BRENDA Kali that was a long
 KALI Kali con Brenda de We
 Longo ... por vida.
 NARRATOR And he's got his
 me. The first arms that eve
 KALI Hey girl, let's not go h
 BRENDA Okay. (They walk in
 NARRATOR He was GOOD!!!
 He was rich. He was dangi
 start hanging out ... I'm in
 course, we see things a litt
 I can handle it. A few mo
 at a restaurant ...
 KALI Hey girl! Ova at da ba
 kine, what's her face? You
 Judy?
 BRENDA Judy!
 JUDY Brenda, look at you!
 BRENDA Judy! I can't believ

ah, well . . . What ya been up
 married?
 ike go out tonight?
 ai! I'm going out tonight! Kali -
 r him?! (*Undresses while singing*
 : "Different Strokes") "There is the
 ;" - army boots. "Who won't
 e red one," - fatigues. "for living
 white one," - Mao jacket. Che
 ifferent strokes for different
 sss! (*Takes shower*) "And so on
 1 and scooby, dooby, doo wa . . ."
 (air)
 emember Kali? He's the guy
 ked ya out in High school. He
 my first kiss. "We gotta live
 ' (*Swish! Opens closet door, looks*)
 u Sherry for the ole green satin!
 n and so on and . . ." (*Unlocks*
 l, how do I look? Do I look like
 .?

most woman.
 And even though it's evening,
 es us Vietnamese style coffee in
 porcelain teacups.
 ou Brenda, and one for me.
 o, you want to be Vietnamese . . .
 What?
 u end up with Kali you'll be like
 en back home . . .
 Which is?
 : the rice, make the babies, feed
 , and run.
 God, Hai, you are so full of cheer.
 u have to have a man, find a
 ite man.
 : Ding-Dong. Kali's standing
 i a white Italian silk suit, with a
 f red, red roses. Big as cabbages.
 m Mama. She say, "No forget your
 ary."
 t He turns to Hai . . .
 n nai angh Guayahum? . . .
 t Hai turns, walks to her room
 ns the door.
 Kali, what'd you say to her?
 ough I said "How ya doing?"

nes Courting

r We get in his car. White
 . White leather seats. (*Singing*
 'athaway's "Where is the Love")
 cruising PCH, Pacific Coast
 y. We pull up at the Five Crowns
 ant.

KALI I like dis place. It's ono.
 NARRATOR This guy comes over and opens
 my door.

MAITRE D' Mr. K! How nice to see you!
 HOSTESS Mr. K? The same table as usual?
 WAITER Mr. K, tonight I'd recommend the
 prime rib or the lobster. Take your time.
 BRENDA Kali, this place is pretty bougie.
 KALI You know Bren, I go by Darren now.
 BRENDA (*Laughs*) Darren? I can't call you
 Darren.

KALI Okay. But only you can call me Kali.
 BRENDA Kali . . . Look! We used to go body
 surfing down there.

KALI Yeah . . . (*Smiles*) Hey? How's your
 folks?

BRENDA (*Shrugs*) They're okay.

KALI You know, my very first job was
 working at Dave's Pharmacy! I loved that
 job. Folks would call your dad, tell him
 what they needed and he'd send me out
 with the deliveries. And that's what I still
 do. I'm a "delivery boy."

NARRATOR Oh! Oh! There is no way I can
 get involved with this guy again. No way!

KALI Hey, Bren, I'm doin' good now. I live
 in a village where I sit with the elders.
 My house, I wish you could see it. On
 stilts over da wada. I get home, take off
 my suit, throw on a malo, hang out on
 the lanai and just watch the clouds
 floating in the wada. And I think, hey
 now, you graduated.

NARRATOR The meal's over. We're leaving.
 Kali and I stop to watch the sunset.

KALI (*sings*) You're my past, you're my
 pres . . .

BRENDA Kali that was a long . . .

KALI Kali con Brenda de Westside Barrio
 Longo . . . por vida.

NARRATOR And he's got his arms around
 me. The first arms that ever held me.

KALI Hey girl, let's not go home.

BRENDA Okay. (*They walk into the sunset.*)

NARRATOR He was GOOD!!! He was fine.
 He was rich. He was dangerous. So we
 start hanging out . . . I'm in love. Of
 course, we see things a little different but
 I can handle it. A few months later, we're
 at a restaurant . . .

KALI Hey girl! Ova at da bar. Isn't that da
 kine, what's her face? Your old teacha?
 Judy?

BRENDA Judy!

JUDY Brenda, look at you! All grown up!

BRENDA Judy! I can't believe it's you! I'm

teaching now. At Poly! Can you believe it?
 JUDY That's good news. Good news. Give
 those kids everything you got . . . Give
 'em your love, your life, your youth . . .
 (*Tipsy*) Give 'em every goddamn thing
 you . . . got!

KALI Ya know Girl, you're going end up
 just like her . . . one wasted, dried up,
 drunk. Cuz what you're doing for dose
 kids ain't happening.

BRENDA Why, thank you! I just spent six
 months getting Bullet out of a gang,
 finding him a job, and you say it ain't
 happening.

KALI It's not real . . . You're cutting him off
 from his source and without his source,
 he has no mana. Bren, you may not like
 what me and Smoke are doing, but we're
 real and we're at the center of our source.

BRENDA What source? You don't live on
 the Westside. Smoke lives in P.V. and you
 live in Thailand!

KALI The Westside's here (*gestures*) . . . with
 me all the time . . . It's like Mama's
 flowers . . . I smell dem and everyting
 comes to me since small kid time, and I
 feel strong. That's the source. But cut the
 source, destroy the self.

BRENDA All I know is I'm working my ass
 off for these kids! What do you ever do?

KALI We take care of people in our own
 way - my ma, your ma . . . your fada.
 Where you think he got dat job? Surprise,
 huh? We fight for them all the time. We're
 warriors, 'cept now we're Westside
 Warriors multinational.

BRENDA Isn't that a fancy title for drug
 dealers, Darren?

KALI I'm leaving in a week for Thailand.

BRENDA (*Pause*) Leaving? . . . Just like
 that?! God Kali, you're great!

KALI Come with me.

BRENDA Why would I do that?

KALI Cuz Brenda, I'm your source.

Bullet's Death

NARRATOR I'm walking up my stairs and I
 hear . . . (*Sound of wailing*)

BRENDA The whorehouse? (*Sound of*
wailing) Hai? Hail!? Are you alright?
 (*A wail*)

NARRATOR Inside my apartment Rosie's
 sitting on my couch, Hai's rocking her
 and making this strange sound. (*HAI*
gives a moaning wail.) Baby Luz, in a long

white christening gown, is playing with her mother's hair . . .

ROSIE Luz, Lu, Daddy gave you that name. It means light. Because you're the light of his life. Yes you are mija . . . Daddy's safe now. Safe . . .

BRENDA Rosie, what's going on?

ROSIE Dey shot Bullet, twice in the head and once in the chest.

NARRATOR She stands up and she's covered with blood!

ROSIE You killed him. You killed him!

BRENDA Rosie!

ROSIE ¡Callete! Don't touch my baby!

BRENDA Rosie. Rosie!

ROSIE Get the fuck out of our Barrio!
(Brenda backs away, wanders. She stops dumbfounded. Lights out.)

Part 4: San Francisco

"If You're Going to San Francisco" (musical transition)

NARRATOR I moved to San Francisco. I got a quiet little job, a cheap apartment . . . I don't know anybody, but that's okay because I don't have to be responsible for anybody's life but my own.

Time passes. Then one day, "Ring! Ring!"

MOM Hello Brenda Jean. This is your momma.

BRENDA Mom!

NARRATOR All of a sudden I'm a kid again. That weekend I fly home. I think that I'm gonna have a big scene with my dad but he's so happy to see me everything's fine. Great! After supper, I'm hanging out on the front porch and I hear . . .
(Kali gives Warriors' whistle.)

NARRATOR He's standing there . . . starched khakis, rolled tee shirt . . . bulging muscles . . . shaved head . . . a stone pinto . . . an ex-con . . .

BRENDA Kali - It's been . . .

KALI Four years, tree months, two days.

BRENDA Yeah. Rumor had it you were in Texas. In prison.

KALI I'm out. You like go beach?

NARRATOR So we go down to Cherry Beach.

KALI (Plays with the sand then starts to talk)
In Thailand everyday, I put on my white suit, my white shoes, my driver takes me to the airport. I'm a businessman. I go

down to Pan Am. Pay a little extra for "excess" baggage. Say "hey" to Beni, head of security. Take my seat, first class and wait for the Coovaseeyeh!

Kali in the Cage

KALI Then one day, I put on my white suit, white shoes, my driver takes me to the airport, wave to Beni and he cuffs me. "Hey, Bra? Whas up?" And he says "We're doin' business with another team." And they drag me away and throw me butt naked into a tiger cage. Tiger cage . . . It's this big. Exactly. The cage come up to here. (Mimes cage) I'm in there wit eight uda guys. We eat and shit together. Pilau!

So I'm waiting - hungry. You don't get no goulash on a tin plate. This is Thailand. Either your people feed you or you starve.

KALI So I am waiting for Smoke.

MAN May I offer you a cigarette?

KALI It's the king of the cage. This old man smoking Shermans, eating good . . . His people take care of him. But I say, "No thanks." Cuz I don't want to owe 'em nothin'. I'm thirsty and the guards give me wada the color of shit.

MAN Would you care for a beer or some other refreshment?

KALI No thanks, I told you my boys are coming. But they never came. They never FUCKING came.

Two years in that (pause) cage! If it wasn't for that nice old man, I'd be dead. But I'm out . . . I'm here on the beach . . . wid you . . . I'm okay, right? . . . (sobs convulsively) Bren? . . . Bren!!!

NARRATOR And he holds me really tight . . . And I'd never seen him cry before . . . and I'm thinking, "Come on Brenda, not again. You're not a Westside mama any more - This is not your responsibility!" Then I say . . .

BRENDA Hey Homie, why don't ya come up to San Francisco? Start over?

Domestic Difficulties

NARRATOR Kali moves in. We do Chinatown, Fisherman's Wharf, ride the cable cars. And during the week I go to work and Kali - he's great. He makes dinner. Gives me massages. Flowers . . .

everywhere. I took him to Ma him clothes, called up everyon and he goes out everyday lool work. Then one day . . .

KALI Maybe today I stay home pilau.

NARRATOR So he stays home a mean really cleans. He's got a toothbrush he uses on the ba tiles. He spends three hours toilet.

KALI Can't stand pilau.

NARRATOR He gives me a bat a day. And he showers at lea

And every night, he puts c apron and makes us dinner.

KALI (Obsessively) Do ya like i it? More shoyu! It's too swee It's ono!

BRENDA It's fine!

NARRATOR And he stays up 1 drinks.

KALI Coovaseeyah!

NARRATOR From Hai's farew blue procelain teacup.

KALI (Sings in drunken stupor nate mannerisms) "You're m my present, you're my futu And we live togeda, foeva, da . . ." (Mimes breaking HAI

Oh! I wen broke da cup! cup, she we'n Broke . . . He Girllll! Wake up! Wake up! cup. So lets cruise. Now!

NARRATOR We head south o

BRENDA Come on honey, sl You're doin' 90 . . .

KALI S'kay! Mama-San, S'Ok like me pussy whipped? I'

Don't ya know me? Not n

NARRATOR He pulls over. P floors it. Right into the on lights.

KALI Oooh! Weee! Dodge b Dodge ball? From small k me! Kiss my ass motherfu

BRENDA Kali! Stop it! Look OOOOO!!!!!!

NARRATOR He stops. We're middle of the freeway - a freaked out and I'm so re we . . .

BRENDA (Heavy sexual bre climaxes in orgasm) Kali!

NARRATOR Things are get control.

an Am. Pay a little extra for baggage. Say "hey" to Beni, head r. Take my seat, first class and ie Coovaseeyeh!

e Cage

one day, I put on my white shoes, my driver takes me to t, wave to Beni and he cuffs Bra? Whas up?" And he says n' business with another team." drag me away and throw me l into a tiger cage. Tiger cage s big. Exactly. The cage come . (*Mimes cage*) I'm in there wit guys. We eat and shit together.

waiting - hungry. You don't get 1 on a tin plate. This is Either your people feed you or

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offer you a cigarette?
e king of the cage. This old ing Shermans, eating good ...
: take care of him. But I say, s." Cuz I don't want to owe 'em n thirsty and the guards give he color of shit.
you care for a beer or some ashment?
anks, I told you my boys are ut they never came. They never came.
rs in that (*pause*) cage! If it that nice old man, I'd be dead. it ... I'm here on the beach ...
... I'm okay, right? ... (*sobs* y) Bren? ... Bren!!!
And he holds me really tight d never seen him cry before ...
inking, "Come on Brenda, not 're not a Westside mama any is is not your responsibility!"
/ ...
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Difficulties

Kali moves in. We do
i, Fisherman's Wharf, ride the
And during the week I go to
Kali - he's great. He makes
ves me massages. Flowers ...

everywhere. I took him to Macy's, bought him clothes, called up everyone I knew and he goes out everyday looking for work. Then one day ...

KALI Maybe today I stay home. This place pilau.

NARRATOR So he stays home and cleans. I mean really cleans. He's got this little toothbrush he uses on the bathroom tiles. He spends three hours washing the toilet.

KALI Can't stand pilau.

NARRATOR He gives me a bath three times a day. And he showers at least four times.

And every night, he puts on his little apron and makes us dinner.

KALI (*Obsessively*) Do ya like it? Do ya like it? More shoyu! It's too sweet! It's ono? It's ono!

BRENDA It's fine!

NARRATOR And he stays up late and drinks.

KALI Coovaseeyah!

NARRATOR From Hai's farewell gift, the blue porcelain teacup.

KALI (*Sings in drunken stupor with effeminate mannerisms*) "You're my past, you're my present, you're my future, girl ... And we live togeda, foeva, like da wada to da ..." (*Mimes breaking HAI's cup*)

Oh! I wen broke da cup! Girl, Hai's cup, she we'n Broke ... Hey girl, Girl! Girl!!! Wake up! Wake up! I wen broke da cup. So lets cruise. Now!

NARRATOR We head south on 280 ...

BRENDA Come on honey, slow down ... You're doin' 90 ...

KALI S'kay! Mama-San, S'Okay! Wot? You like me pussy whipped? I'm da king.

Don't ya know me? Not no fucking fairy!!!

NARRATOR He pulls over. Pops a "U-ie" and floors it. Right into the oncoming headlights.

KALI Oooh! Weee! Dodge ball! 'Member Dodge ball? From small kid time? Miss me! Kiss my ass motherfucker.

BRENDA Kali! Stop it! Look out! N-N-N-OOOO!!!!!!

NARRATOR He stops. We're parked - in the middle of the freeway - and I'm so freaked out and I'm so relieved that I ... we ...

BRENDA (*Heavy sexual breathing that climaxes in orgasm*) Kali! Kali! Kali! (*Pause*)

NARRATOR Things are getting a little out of control.

The Cocktail Party

NARRATOR Then one day, George, a friend of mine, a Chinese poet, invites us to a party at his house. I'm a little nervous.

It's me and Kali's first time out in public.

BRENDA George! Great to see you ... This is "Darren."

NARRATOR (*Gives sigh of relief*) But Kali's great. He's standing there in the corner holding court. And then I notice that all along while we're sipping wine, "Cheers! Salud!" He's drinking Jack Daniels from the bottle. He stands up and KA BOOM!! Right on his face. Everyone stops. And looks. George runs over to help him up.

KALI I'm okay. Upsy daisy. Thanks man.

You hanging wit me, man. I love ya, man.

Hey, George? You're not listening to me. I said I love you. So come on. Put that sweet little Pake booty in my face!

NARRATOR And Kali starts humping

George. And George says ...

GEORGE Get him off of me. GET HIM OFF OF ME! GET HIM THE HELL OUT OF MY HOUSE, BRENDA!!!

NARRATOR I drag 200 something pounds of him home ... up two flights of stairs ... to the bedroom ...

KALI I gotta shi-shi.

NARRATOR To the bathroom. He can't stand up so I lean him against the door, unzip his fly and he starts to pee. Then he collapses, trapping us inside.

KALI I'm thirsty.

NARRATOR I try to give him a little water and he says ...

KALI No thanks man. My boys are coming ... Smoke, man, hurry up. I can't hang much longer. (*Sips*) Thanks man, I know I owe you man, thanks. When my boys get here ... No. No. Don't do me. Please don't do me. No ... Umh ... Umhh ... Ummh! (*Pause*) I'm all Pilau. Pilau. Smoke - (*Glances*) I wanna go home. Please let me go home ...

NARRATOR He starts to cry and I don't know what to do so I hold him, and hold him ...

BRENDA Kali, I can't hang anymore. You've got to figure this stuff out yourself cuz I don't know what to do for you. I'm dying. You've got to go cuz I can't handle - Just go! (*Stares at light bulb*)

NARRATOR The next morning, I get up. I go to work. I come home. I take off my

jacket . . . Kali's gone. *(Pause)* Months pass. I get into my work. I make up with my friends. I tell myself I'm A-OK.

Re-enter Sherry

SHERRY Ring! Ring! Hello, Brenda? This is Sherry.

NARRATOR Sherry? I hadn't talked to her in years. Last thing I heard Smoke was in jail and she was a single mother on the Westside.

SHERRY Smoke's out. He got out of the pen last week. He's after Kali. All the Pinoy and Guamanians are backin' Smoke. The Samoans and Hawaiians are with Kali.

BRENDA What!? Why?

SHERRY You mean you don't know? Kali sold Smoke to the DEA.

BRENDA Sherry, I cut him loose. He's on his own.

SHERRY Fine, whatever. But you've got to talk to him. Get him outta here. He's on a suicide mission, you know. He's crazy.

BRENDA Sherry, don't you think I know that? That's why I cut him loose.

SHERRY You're not gonna help us? Your ole man and my ole man are blowing up the whole Westside. Maybe in Frisco they don't have drive-bys, stray bullets. It could be your mom coming home from work, my kid coming home from school. Oh, but that has nothing to do with you! That's not your "responsibility!" Oh Brenda, how white of you.

BRENDA Shit! I jump a cab. Catch the next flight to L.A. Now I am back on the Westside, sitting on an old couch covered with a stained sheet, electric fan on the coffee table, sound of the freeway coming through the paper thin walls. *(Music out)* Sherry runs her hand through her short cropped hair and lights another Kool . . .

SHERRY You were Kali's safehouse you know. Smoke's had a contract on him ever since he squealed to the DEA . . . I'm surprised he even made it out of the pen. Dinner's in the oven, Hon.

NARRATOR In the doorway, starch khakis, rolled tee shirt, blue rag, caramel colored skin . . . blonde hair . . . glaring at us.

SHERRY You remember my son. He's trying to hate me. Cuz he's part white. He wants to be 100 percent Guamanian like

his Daddy. He's all excited about Smoke and Kali's stupid vendetta.

Re-enter Smoke

SMOKE Brenda? What are you doing here?

NARRATOR It's Smoke . . . He hasn't changed. He's just older.

SHERRY I called her.

BRENDA Smoke—

SMOKE —Brenda, I know why you're here

BRENDA No, you don't know why I'm here. Let me finish. Kali's a wreck and it's all your fault. You let him rot like an animal in a cage. Your brother. You stupid ass . . . mother . . .

SMOKE I tried! I was not gonna leave him in there. It was a coup! I was this close and Kali turns me in. My brother! Seven years in the pen . . . and now I—we ain't got nothin'!

NARRATOR And Sherry says . . .

SHERRY Ya got me. Us. We waited for you.

NARRATOR Ding-Dong. In walk all these kids, \$100 sneakers, baggy ass black shorts, Raiders' caps on backwards. Smoke's army. One of 'em says . . .

BANGER Hey, Pops? We gonna cap up some coconuts tonight? Splat! Splat! Splat! Hah, hah, hah, hah, hah!

SHERRY Come on Brenda, lets get out of here . . .

NARRATOR I follow Sherry out the apartment and Smoke says,

SMOKE *(Shouting after them)* Brenda, Kali wants me to kill him!

Last Ride thru the Westside

NARRATOR We get in her car and cruise . . . Fast — through the Westside . . . Under the yellow streetlights . . . gang tags, crossed out . . . sneakers hangin' off power lines . . . little kids with cellular phones — lookouts . . . cars lining up on street corners like they're picking up fast food . . . sirens screaming in the night . . . the business of drugs in full swing.

We pull up at Aunti Mary's house. Sherry cuts the engine. We just sit.

SHERRY I don't know what else to do. Now it's on you, Brenda.

NARRATOR I look at Sherry. She must have gained 60 to 70 pounds. The chain-smoking shows on her face and her

golden hair is chopped off.

SHERRY I've changed, huh, Brenda I'm the fat mama. Que viva Wests:

BRENDA And I'm the cold bitch from Frisco.

SHERRY No, Brenda, you came.

BRENDA Yeah, here we are . . .

SHERRY My boy's only 14. He's all . . . They call him Dreamer.

Goodbye

NARRATOR I get out of the car, slam door, and I'm hit *(pause)* by the overwhelming fragrance of Aunti Mary garden. *(Inhales, exhales)* And I can breathe.

MARY Brenda, Kali's here, go inside.

NARRATOR It's Aunti Mary. Cutting roses. I go into her parlor and there all these men, old Westside Warrio bellies hanging over their belts, yo boys with hard faces drinking . . . smoking . . . knives . . . guns . . . K Army . . . waiting . . . I go into the bedroom . . .

There's Kali, fresh out of the she naked from the waist up. He sees : the mirror . . .

KALI Hows it?

BRENDA *(Nods)* You like go beach?

KALI Ah, Mada Ocean. You rememb rip?

BRENDA Huntington Beach. Big 14. : the limit

KALI My wahine.

BRENDA Come on Kali, let's go . . .

Shoot-out

NARRATOR Boom Boom *(Pause)* Shi! Boom *(Pause)* shi! A parade of slow-moving cars. Smoke and all his me Kali says . . .

KALI I'm goin' swimmin'. You wait f

NARRATOR He goes into the parlor, j up an AK-47 . . .

KALI Okay! Let's go fo' broke!

NARRATOR Kicks open the door. His

He's all excited about Smoke stupid vendetta.

Smoke

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thru the Westside

We get in her car and cruise through the Westside ... Under w streetlights ... gang tags, ut ... sneakers hangin' off ies ... little kids with cellular lookouts ... cars lining up on ners like they're picking up fast sirens screaming in the night ... less of drugs in full swing. l up at Aunti Mary's house. its the engine. We just sit. don't know what else to do. Now u, Brenda.

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golden hair is chopped off.
SHERRY I've changed, huh, Brenda ... Now I'm the fat mama. Que viva Westside ...
BRENDA And I'm the cold bitch from Frisco.
SHERRY No, Brenda, you came.
BRENDA Yeah, here we are ...
SHERRY My boy's only 14. He's all I got. They call him Dreamer.

Goodbye

NARRATOR I get out of the car, slam the door, and I'm hit (pause) by the overwhelming fragrance of Aunti Mary's rose garden. (Inhales, exhales) And I can breathe.

MARY Brenda, Kali's here, go inside.

NARRATOR It's Aunti Mary. Cutting her roses. I go into her parlor and there are all these men, old Westside Warriors with bellies hanging over their belts, young boys with hard faces drinking ... smoking ... knives ... guns ... Kali's Army ... waiting ... I go into the bedroom ...

There's Kali, fresh out of the shower, naked from the waist up. He sees me in the mirror ...

KALI Hows it?

BRENDA (Nods) You like go beach?

KALI Ah, Mada Ocean. You remember da rip?

BRENDA Huntington Beach. Big 14. Sky's the limit

KALI My wahine.

BRENDA Come on Kali, let's go ...

Shoot-out

NARRATOR Boom Boom (Pause) Shi! Boom Boom (Pause) shi! A parade of slow-moving cars. Smoke and all his men. And Kali says ...

KALI I'm goin' swimmin'. You wait for me?

NARRATOR He goes into the parlor, picks up an AK-47 ...

KALI Okay! Let's go fo' broke!

NARRATOR Kicks open the door. His army

risers and they move into the garden.

BRENDA Kali!

NARRATOR Smoke and his boys get out of the cars (Westside whistles) and Smoke yells across the garden,

SMOKE Kali man, you still here?

KALI Always brah, always.

SMOKE Kali ... I-I-I don't want to kill you ... but you fucked me. You fucked me!! ...

KALI You didn't come. I couldn't wait. So come on. Do me!

NARRATOR BANG! BANG! ... Gun shots ... Men running ... trampling the bushes ... the flowers ... and in the midst of the madness, Aunti Mary ... and in her arms ... bunches and bunches of red, red, roses, big as cabbages ...

MARY Smoke! Smoke! All the Islanders are here now. You and Kali, just like braddahs since small kid time! So easy to die. Go inside. Talk ...

NARRATOR BANG! Red, red, Roses! Falling through the air ...

I look over and I see Dreamer. And from his gun a wisp of smoke drifting up into the yellow street lamps. And Dreamer says ...

DREAMER I did it, Pops, I tasted blood, man ... Hey? Why ya lookin' at me? I took out a mother fuckin' Hawaiian. I mean, that's what this is all about, right? Right?

NARRATOR That was not the last shot fired that day ... Kali's gone ... (Pause) ... So's Dreamer ... Smoke disappeared ... Sherry's doin' better now. Me ... I went back to San Francisco and I didn't want to come home for a long time ... But my mom, dad, sisters and little bro still live on the Westside. And even though I live in San Francisco, the Westside is here. (Points to chest)

I still love roses. They remind me of Aunti Mary. She really was a queen, you know. Her garden is now choked with weeds, but it's amazing, every year some roses still bloom.

(Curtain)